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## The charge of Cyrus the great



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T H E  
C H A R G E  
O F  
*CYRUS* the Great.  
A  
Poetical ESSAY.

---

By the Rev. Mr. *RICHARD ONELY*, B. A.  
Late of Christ-College, Cambridge.

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*Illa tanquam cygnea fuit divini hominis vox, et  
oratio.*

CICER. de Orat.

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## P R E F A C E.

THE Learned Reader will be pleased to observe, that the following ESSAY had its Rise from the last famous Oration, that is recorded of Cyrus by Xenophon.

This great Monarch was born in the 3405<sup>th</sup> Took Babylon in the - - - 3466<sup>th</sup> Founded the Persian Empire in the 3468<sup>th</sup> And died in the - - - 3475<sup>th</sup>

Year of the World      Years before Christ

599	538	536	529
538	536	529	Years before Christ

HE was a Prince of the most exalted [Pagan] Virtues : He is mentioned in \* Holy Writ, as a Person chosen out and directed by God (whom he knew not) to effect some of his extraordinary Purposes in favour of his Peculiar People Israel ; and the Heathen Historians so exactly agreeing with the Sacred Writers in their Relation of the most important Instances of Cyrus's Life, is a great Confirmation of the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, and of weighty Service to Religion in general.                          B

\* Ezra i. Isa. xlvi.

THE  
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Leave of his Family, and Friends.

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T H E

# CHARGE of CYRUS.

WHAT means this awful Sight? why round me  
shine

Those radiant Glories, and that Form divine?

See! where, commission'd with some dread Command,  
How sternly waves yon' visionary Hand!

Near and more near it beckons, " *Cyrus, rise;*  
" The Gods remand Thee to thy native Skies."

SINCE thus the Pleasure of Imperial *Jove*,  
And solemn Omens warn me from Above;  
Come then, ye Fathers, venerable grown,  
Whose steady Counsels prop the *Persian* Throne!  
Ye Friends, long wedded to fair Virtue's Cause,  
And Ye, my Sons, whom filial Duty awes!  
Attentive hear, amidst th' assembled Throng,  
The dying Accents of a Monarch's Tongue.

I CEASE to live ! yet, ah ! forbear to shew  
 The mad Expressions of unmanly Woe.  
 To die, is to be blest : This understood,  
 'Twere needless mourning for the Wife and Good.

WHAT Virtues charm us, or what Arts engage  
 In Childhood, Youth, in Manhood, or in Age,  
 In these I spent each well-distinguish'd Day,  
 And still pursu'd, where Honour led the Way :  
 Mine was each Gift kind Fortune could afford,  
 The Statesman's Counsel, or the Hero's Sword.  
 See, *Asia*, see thy once ignoble Race,  
 What Glory heightens, and what Worthies grace !  
 See Peace thy Realms with smiling Train adorn,  
 And Plenty pour the Treasures of her Horn.

YET, oft as Fortune blew propitious Gales,  
 And mildest *Zephyrs* fann'd my fwelling Sails,  
 Still Caution warn'd me, anxious for the Realm,  
 And Reason fear'd to quit her much-lov'd Helm :

She

She calmly stemm'd Ambition's boist'rous Tide,  
 And lower'd the Projects of Gigantick Pride :  
 Hence unimpair'd are all my Blessings now ;  
 Hence fresh my Laurels blooming o'er my Brow :  
 Sage Foresight only keeps our Conquests won ;  
 The too Secure too surely are undone.

No claimant Princes shall hereafter jar,  
 (The bloody Sources of intestine War.)  
 For thus I will---both ye, my Children, share  
 A-like my Fondness, and a-like my Care !  
 Yet you, my Eldest, to the Crown succeed ;  
 'Tis what thy Father, what the Gods decreed.  
 Reflect, from whence that sacred Pow'r is giv'n,  
 Its Fount, the grand Authority of Heav'n !  
 Reflect, that Monarchs only were design'd  
 To guard their People, and to bless Mankind !  
 Each Royal Mandate Equity should bound,  
 And Goodness cast a Smile on all around.

Nor less, whilst, hov'ring o'er th' embattl'd Field,  
 Her Palms to Thee fond Victory shall yield,      Let

Let Mercy plead : No Hero's truly Brave  
 Without that God-like Principle---To Save :  
 Distress should bid our gen'rous Pity flow,  
 Whilst Nature softens at another's Woe.

By me releas'd, O ! how the *Jewish* Choir  
 To *Sion*'s Songs re-tun'd the sacred Lyre,  
 Which by the \* Streams of *Babylon*, unstrung,  
 In late sad Silence on the Willows hung !

† Dismiss'd with Presents to their old Abode,  
 To build the Temple of their much-lov'd God,  
 ‡ Each Mouth was full of Laughter long unknown ;  
 'The Joy, that fill'd *their* Hearts, o'erflow'd my own.

THY Breast, young Prince, let all these Virtues fire,  
 And nobly to the World confess thy Sire.

This happy State, that, from an Heav'nly Plan,  
 Forms every Scheme of Happiness to Man,  
 By Justice 'stablish, and by Arms defend ;  
 No Feuds embroil, and no Divisions rend !

Transmit

\* See Psalm cxxxvii.

† The famous Edict of *Cyrus* in Behalf of the *Jews*, which is here alluded to, is recited in  
*Ezdras*. 2 Chron. i. 7.

‡ See Psalm cxxvi.

Transmit entire, to bless the peaceful Home  
Of Nations now unborn, and Monarchs yet to come.

AND thou, my Son, thou Youngest, shalt command  
The narrower Confines of some neighbouring Land.  
Tho' larger Realms thy Brother's Sway confess,  
*Thy* Peace is greater, as *thy* Kingdom less.  
Ambition's Spur still pungent to the Soul,  
When o'er his Mind his Father's Glories roll ;  
Pursuing close up Labour's craggy Steep,  
Fame hard to gain, and harder yet to keep ;  
Foremost in Cares, as first in Rule, to shine ;  
These, These are His---but Pleasures all are Thine.

AND weak, *Cambyses*, will thy Kingdom prove,  
Without the Scepter of thy People's Love.  
But yet it asks thy Caution, all thy Care,  
Thy Subjects when to court, and when beware :  
Not true by Nature, Man, whate'er he boast,  
Most faithfull seeming, may deceive the most.

Be Thine the well-try'd Statesman, prudent, just,  
 Unsway'd by Lucre, unenflav'd by Lust :  
 Who public Good prefers to private Ends,  
 Whose Truth directs you, and whose Zeal defends.  
 Then no sad Murmurs can Suspicion raise ;  
 Admiring Anarchy itself obeys ;  
 Base Treason dreads Infernal Plots to lay,  
 And calm'd Rebellion looks her Rage away.

THIS once, O \* *Daniel*, was *thy* God-like Part,  
 Thy Head as learn'd, as was sincere thy Heart.  
 Tho' fullen Jealousy oft curs'd thy Name,  
 And Envy plann'd the Ruins of thy Fame,  
 Thy spotless Honour cou'd the Mouth defy  
 Of deadly Lions, or the deadlier Spy.  
 Chiefs, such as Thou, be stguard each Prince's Cause,  
 Whom Conscience binds, and whom Religion awes.

THY Friends promote, thy Brother first of These,  
 Advancing most *His* Honour, Interest, Ease ;                            So

\* The Prophet *Daniel* was Prime Minister about 70 Years to the Prince of *Babylon*, of whom *Cyrus* was the last, who engag'd him in his Service, in which he, very probably, died.

So shall his Soul with kindred Passions burn,  
 And grateful Friendship make the best Return ;  
 Faithful alike his Counsels and his Arms,  
 When Peace shall bless you, or when War alarms.

BUT, oh ! if where Respect her Balms should bring,  
 Pride rears her Crest, and Envy's Adders sting ;  
 If Royal Brothers, when some Fiend inspires,  
 When Anger prompts, or when Ambition fires,  
 Divide Themselves, and with imperious Awe  
 Their People's Hearts to diff'rent Factions draw ;  
 Then soon will Peace, that Guardian Goddess, fail,  
 And injur'd Justice drop her equal Scale ;  
 Faith, Heav'nly Guest, forsake her wonted Stand,  
 And Truth indignant flee the guilty Land ;  
 In Concord's Temple wild Contention reign,  
 And madning Fury clank her broken Chain ;  
 Her Rights sequester'd Freedom shall deplore,  
 And Mercy's grand Asylum be no more.

O ! then, my Sons, by that great God above !  
 By Filial Duty ! by Parental Love !  
 Let sacred Friendship with you ever grow,  
 The best of Blessings Earth contains below.

NOR think, when this poor Life away shall flee,  
 Your Royal Father never more must BE.  
 Tho' in our Breast the Soul's unseen, 'tis clear  
 A Soul immortal has Existence there.  
 Or whence has Action its energetic Spring ?  
 Or whence, Reflection, thy excursive Wing ?  
 Whence all the dreadful Scene of Horror spread  
 Around the trembling Murderer's guilty Head !  
 Or why does thus, when Mortals dare to sin,  
 Vindictive Conscience ply the Lash within ?  
 Why o'er the Grave those glaring Trophies blaze ?  
 Why all the Pomp of Monumental Praise ?  
 Vain were the lofty Muses' Epic Strain,  
 Vain the sad Dirge, the rising Column vain,

If human Souls Mortality must share,  
And at the last but vanish into Air.

OUR Thirst for Truth, which cannot here abate,  
Points out some clearer, some more perfect State ;  
Whilst longing Hope still bids us calmly die,  
And take our fair Possession of the Sky.

SEE Innocence with various Cares distres'd,  
Unfed, uncloath'd, unmansion'd, and oppres'd !  
See modest Worth, 'midst Troubles undeserv'd !  
Admir'd, repuls'd ! just pitied, prais'd, and stary'd !  
Yet still rejoice the Sons of virtuous Woe,  
Tho' prosp'rous Vice triumphant reigns below ;  
On Honour's Mount tho' glares the perjur'd Chief,  
*They* walk contented thro' the Vale of Grief !  
----It must be so----what Reas'ner can believe,  
That Souls, when freed from Bodies, cease to live ?  
Let Age the weak corporeal Frame destroy,  
The Soul survives----This, This, can never die :

Whilst *That* inactive moulders in the Tomb,  
*This* still shall flourish in immortal Bloom,  
Purg'd from all earthly Dross, for ever rove  
Thro' all th' unbounded Tracts of Happiness above.

WHEN drowsy Slumbers o'er the Spirits creep,  
Reflect, what Death is, from it's Image, Sleep !  
In airy Dreams the Soul then wings its Way,  
Freed from the dull Impediments of Clay,  
Holds Converse sweet with every kindred Pow'r,  
In Myrtle Grove, or Amaranthin Bow'r ;  
Thro' Worlds unknown quick darts the vital Flame,  
And traverses all Heav'n, from whence it came.

BUT yet if, with the Body, rigid Fate  
The Soul's Existence should annihilate,  
(How, when fond Thoughts the pleasing Theme pursue,  
Does anxious \* Doubt thus terminate the View !)  
Yet still to God let pure Devotion rise,  
All-powerful, just, all-merciful and wise;                    Whose

\* The Notions of the wisest Heathens concerning a Future State were mixed with such Doubts and Uncertainties, that the strongest Expressions of their Philosophers upon this Subject are little better than mere Scepticism, when compar'd to the Discoveries of the Gospel, which alone has brought Life and Immortality to their fullest Light.

Whose piercing Eye each secret Fraud detects ;  
 Whose Wisdom governs, and whose Care directs,  
 That Time, nor Fate hath in Confusion hurl'd  
 The Beauty, Order, Grandeur of the World.

HENCE, where some \* Mountain, awful to the Sight,  
 Rears its huge Summit to yon' Realms of Light,  
 Let humble Pray'r, propitiating the Skie,  
 The Body prostrate, or uplift the Eye ;  
*There* glad Thanksgiving grateful Altars raise !  
 There choral *Pœans* swell the Song of Praise !

LET no Corruption near Thy Palace spread,  
 Nor dire Oppression rear her Iron Head.  
*There* Heav'n-born Virtues shall attract the Sight,  
 Peace, Love, and Charity, divinely bright ;  
*There* Bounty, guided by † Discretion's Hand,  
 Shall deal her Favours to a grateful Land :  
*There* Truth shall smile, in awful State enshrin'd,  
 The fair Resemblance of th' Eternal Mind,                    There

\* The *Perians* generally perform'd their Religious Exercises in the open Air, on high Places ; as thinking it derogatory from the Majesty of the Deity, to shut that God up within Walls, who should have the Earth for his Altar, and the whole World for his Temple.

† 'Tis a fine Compliment, that *Pliny* pays to the Munificence of the Emperor *Trajan*, —— *Augeo Principis Munus, quam ostendo Liberalitati ejus insere Rationem.*                    Plin. Paneg. Traj.

*There* Mercy shall vouchsafe her milder Word ;  
*There* Justice brandish her impartial Sword,  
Shall right the Injur'd, and the Weak defend,  
Each Orphan's Guardian, and each Widow's Friend.

PURSUE, great Prince, pursue th' important Plan ;  
Be fear'd, as Monarch ; but be lov'd, as Man.

AND when my Soul, fair Tenant, flies away  
From this frail Mansion mould'ring to Decay,  
No costly Pile with fun'ral Grandeur burn,  
Nor cull my Ashes for the pompous Urn ;  
Far other Honours let these Relicks have,  
The low-delv'd Chamber of some silent Grave :  
Where when our gloomy long Abode we fix,  
The human Particles with earthly mix,  
Whilst beyond Fate, and Fortune's farthest Line,  
For ever lives the Particle Divine.

YET make my \* Tomb to future Ages known,  
And with a modest Verse inscribe the Stone :                      The

\* Plutarch tells us, that *Alexander*, upon his first coming into *Asia*, found the Sepulchre of *Cyrus* inscrib'd with an Epitaph ; and was exceedingly affected with so serious a Lesson upon the Instability of all human Affairs.

The Verse shall preach some moral Truth to Man-----

“ That Fortune’s various, or that Life’s a Span;  
 “ That vain the Pomp, and Pageantry of State,  
 “ That weak the Mighty, and that frail the Great ;  
 “ Grandeur a Bubble ! Honours empty all !  
 “ That Heroes perish, and that Monarchs fall :”

AND now, my Friends, receive the parting View,  
 Press my chill’d Hand, and bid the last Adieu !  
 Call my dear *Persians* round the solemn Bier,  
 And you, my † Fellow-Soldiers, you be there !  
 With Me who brav’d *Arabia*’s pathless Lands,  
 Bleak *Scythia*’s Coasts, and *India*’s burning Sands ;  
 Whilst strew’d on Heaps around the foaming Steed,  
 Or groan’d th’ *Affyrian*, or expir’d the *Mede*.  
 Brave Troops ! by whom, as Heav’n protecting led,  
 Great *Crœsus* fell, and proud *Belshazzar* bled.

But

† Cyrus’s remarkable Humanity, Munificence, and Affability to his Subjects, and especially to his Soldiery, are frequently mention’d by *Xenophon*; His Harangues to Them before any Military Enterprize are particularly fine; Himself and his whole Army went to Prayers, sung an Hymn, and perform’d other Religious Duties to Heaven before and after every Battle, and always made the first Onset in the Name of Ζευς Σωτῆρος Ἡγεμῶν, that is, his Country God, the Protector and Leader.

BUT now, frail Health, how wan thy Roses seem !  
In flower Currents flows the purple Stream.  
No more this Breast with Martial Rage shall glow,  
Nor rush all Vengeance on the adverse Foe ;  
No more this Arm the flaming Faulchion wield,  
Or gather Lawrels from the well-fought Field ;  
No more----for see the dire Disease prevail,  
My Nerves all tremble, all my Spirits fail !  
-----Ah, Why those Cries ? See lovely Reason near  
To calm the Soul, and wipe off every Tear.  
O ! rather all your wonted Joys renew !  
If Life I leave, I leave its Troubles too :  
For, if my happy Soul to God ascends,  
Or in mere Nothing if my Being ends,  
Death soon shall waft me to some unknown Shore,  
Where Labours end, and Sorrows are no more :  
Where Patriot Heroes in the peaceful Shade  
No Factions threaten, and no Foes invade ;  
Where long Oblivion, ending anxious Strife,  
Stills the wild Hurry of a noisy Life ;  
Or

Or where all Joys with heart-felt Ease abound,  
Whilst youthful Spring for ever blooms around.

COME then, dear Pledges of connubial Joy,  
Come, give the fond Embrace, and let me die ;  
Next, to your \* Mother all this Scene impart ;  
How will it wound, sad Tale ! her tender Heart !  
Her Heart by Grief too delicately mov'd,  
For ever loving, and for ever lov'd.

Ah ! now what Ease employs her softer Hours,  
Near murmur'ring Fountains, or in cooling Bowers  
At *Susa's* royal Court ? What Princely Care  
Far from her dying Lord detains my Fair ?  
Where now that Tongue, that never ceas'd to charm ?  
Where the soft Smile, that Sicknes could disarm ?  
Or where the Hands my weary Eyes to close,  
The last kind Office in my last Repose ?

D

How

\* Cyrus married the Daughter of *Cyaxares* ; who was a very beautiful young Princess, and had the Kingdom of *Media* for her Portion.

How oft I nam'd Her with my latest Breath,  
 How bless'd Her absent, in the Midst of Death,  
 Ye conscious Skies, ye Lights cælestial, tell !  
 Farewel, O Loveliest of thy Sex, Farewel !  
 Farewel, my Chiefs! in *my* Example see  
 What Monarch, General, Patriot, Friend, should be.

*F I N I S.*





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